



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**BANGLADESH**

## Health



*USAID's health programs provide maternal and child health services to the most needy women and children.*

*Photo: USAID*

### FAST FACTS

- A majority of births (85%) in Bangladesh take place at home.
- The maternal mortality ratio in Bangladesh is high, with 320 women dying for every 100,000 live births.
- Two fifths of Bangladeshi children (41%) are underweight.
- Child mortality is high, with 65 deaths of children under 5 per 1,000 live births.
- Neonatal deaths in Bangladesh account for 57% of all child deaths.
- The number of children born per Bangladeshi woman is currently 2.7.
- Tuberculosis (TB) is the leading cause of adult mortality in Bangladesh.

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Its population of 160 million places a tremendous economic, social and environmental strain on the country's resources. In spite of development successes in the last three decades, with fertility declining from 6.3 to 2.7 children/women, Bangladesh's population is still projected to reach 231 million by 2050. The health status of mothers and children remains poor. Due to widespread poverty, children (40%) and mothers (30%) suffer from moderate to severe malnutrition. Malnutrition is also a reason for the death of nearly a quarter of children under five. Bangladesh is also high at risk to the spread of HIV/AIDS despite its low prevalence in the general population, due to a concentrated epidemic among injecting drug users. Bangladesh is considered one of 22 high burden countries for Tuberculosis (TB) and currently has the sixth highest frequency in the world.

USAID funded health programs in family planning and reproductive health; maternal and child health; HIV/AIDS; and Tuberculosis are carried out in underserved areas and particularly targeted to the poor. The programs offer basic health services that include high-quality and low-cost family planning; maternal and child health care; tuberculosis diagnosis and treatment; and curative care. USAID's programs are implemented through an extensive NGO network of 320 clinics, 8,000 satellite clinics and 6,500 community volunteers that provide basic health care service coverage to 20 million Bangladeshis, most of whom would otherwise have no access to health services.

USAID Bangladesh will use the new Presidential Global Health Initiative and Feed the Future Initiative to catalyze nutrition activities within existing and newly developed programs. Under these Initiatives the interventions will include pre conception to improve the nutritional status of adolescent girls, healthy eating habits for pregnant and lactating women, support exclusive breastfeeding up to five months and appropriate complementary feeding of children 6 to 24 months.

### Providing Family Planning and Reproductive Health Services

USAID funds reproductive health services that are provided through NGOs, and selected public and private sector programs. USAID helps to ensure that family planning methods of choice are readily available to all targeted population. USAID-funded NGOs provides training to service delivery points that help strengthen the contraceptive supply chain. USAID also funds public sector reproductive health programs to improve the use and quality of services for long-term and permanent family planning methods. Nearly half of all Bangladeshi couples (48%) use modern contraceptives and nearly two-fifths of this usage rate can be attributed to USAID assistance.



*A woman receives an injectable contraceptive by a trained medical practitioner at a USAID funded health clinic.*

*Photo: USAID*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## Improving Maternal and Child Health

USAID trains counselors on how to conduct home visits and to educate pregnant and/or new mothers on safe delivery and newborn care. Almost 50,000 women are reached with high quality pre and post pregnancy care and newborn care services under the home-based care program.

USAID's clinic-based program reaches both women and children with essential health care. In 2009, about 400,000 women were provided maternal health services; 270,000 children received the DPT3 (Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus) immunization series; 110,000 cases of child pneumonia were treated with antibiotics and over 1.5 million children received a Vitamin A supplement through USAID-funded health services.

USAID funding provides food rations and supplementary feeding for infants, pregnant and lactating mothers, while ensuring clean water and hygienic sanitation facilities. USAID's water programs reach approximately 900,000 individuals, while sanitation programs reach more than 600,000 people.

USAID funding also supports the Social Marketing Company (SMC), the world's largest social marketing corporation. SMC produces 200 million oral rehydration saline (ORS) sachets every year to treat diarrhea, that are distributed through 210,000 private outlets all over Bangladesh. SMC also markets micro-nutrient sachets for children under five of age.

## Enhancing HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care

USAID's HIV/AIDS program provides funding to combat the spread of the disease and provide care and support for populations vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. USAID programs reach the most at risk population, including commercial sex workers (25,000 individuals; including male, female and trans-gender) and injecting drug users (2,000 individuals) by providing access to voluntary counseling and testing services, and diagnosis and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STI).

## Preventing and Treating Tuberculosis (TB)

USAID works to improve and expand TB detection and treatment by reaching nearly 1,000 additional TB patients a year through 38 USAID-assisted health clinics. All USAID assisted clinics achieved a 92% TB treatment success rate. With an estimated 70,000 TB-related deaths and over 320,000 new cases annually, USAID funding helps to significantly increase coverage in urban areas to provide the Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course (DOTS) treatment. USAID also works to improve host country government capacity for Multi-Drug Resistant TB management.

## Improving Food Security - Nutrition

USAID recognizes the need to integrate nutrition activities across different program sectors and mechanisms. For example, USAID's Food Security program targets pregnant/lactating women and children under 2 to help improve the nutritional status by providing supplemental food rations, nutrition education, and access to health care. Additionally, the USAID-supported Social Marketing Program (SMC) distributes micronutrient sachets (MoniMIX) for children under five years of age.